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ACTION EAP-00

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 FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5625
 INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 14141

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PTER, PREL, KS, JA, KN, BA
 SUBJECT: FURTHER ROK REACTION TO SUSPECTED NORTH KOREAN
 SABOTAGE OF KAL 858

REF: SEOUL 14082 (NOTAL)

1. (U) ROK MEDIA CONTINUED ON DECEMBER 3 TO PLAY UP NORTH KOREAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE CRASH OF KAL 858, THE WRECKAGE OF WHICH REPORTEDLY STILL HAS NOT BEEN LOCATED (SEPTEL). JAPANESE POLICE SOURCES WERE PROMINENTLY QUOTED TO THE EFFECT THAT THE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE OF THE TWO JAPANESE PASSPORT-HOLDERS IN BAHRAIN SUGGESTS THAT THEY ARE NORTH KOREAN AGENTS RATHER THAN JAPANESE RADICALS. HOWEVER, THEY WERE SAID TO BE UNABLE TO IDENTIFY THE

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COUPLE AND WERE WAITING FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THEIR FINGERPRINTS FROM BAHRAIN TODAY, DECEMBER 3. ALTHOUGH JAPANESE POLICE INDICATED THAT THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE TWO PERSONS DO NOT MATCH, THE MEDIA HERE CONTINUED TO FOCUS ON

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THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE DEAD SUSPECT WAS MIYAMOTO AKIRA,
AN ETHNIC KOREAN RESIDENT OF JAPAN WHO WAS REVEALED
YESTERDAY TO BE ON A POLICE WANTED LIST FOR ALLEGED
INVOLVEMENT IN NORTH KOREAN ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES IN
JAPAN. MIYAMOTO WAS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN IN KUALA LUMPUR
DURING THE OCTOBER 1983 RANGOON BOMBING, AND TO HAVE
VISITED SEOUL IN SEPTEMBER 1984.

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2. (C) SENIOR BLUE HOUSE POLITICAL SECRETARY LEE JIN WOO
TOLD POLCOUNS ON DECEMBER 3 THAT THE ROKG IS CONCENTRATING
AT PRESENT ON SECURING THE COOPERATION OF ALL GOVERNMENTS
CONCERNED IN INVESTIGATING THE AFFAIR. HE SAID SEOUL IS
WILLING TO LET BAHRAIN TAKE THE LEAD AND HAS NO PLANS TO
REQUEST THE EXTRADITION OF "HACHIYA MAYUMI", THE WOMAN
SUSPECT HOSPITALIZED IN MANAMA.

3. (C) COMMENT: CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE OF NORTH KOREAN
INVOLVEMENT CONTINUES TO ACCUMULATE BUT THE IDENTIFICATION
OF THE SUSPECTS AND THEIR LINKS TO PYONGYANG AND THE CRASH
OF KAL 858 REMAIN LARGELY CONJECTURAL. THE ROKG SO FAR
APPEARS TO BE TAKING AN APPROPRIATELY CAUTIOUS AND
RESTRAINED APPROACH, EMPHASIZING THE PRIORITY OF
ESTABLISHING THE FACTS. WE WILL REPORT SEPARATELY ON WHAT
WE AND OUR ROKG CONTACTS SEE AS THE BROADER IMPLICATIONS
OF THIS AFFAIR FOR SOUTH-NORTH RELATIONS AND ROK DOMESTIC
POLITICS. LILLEY##

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